

Parks and Recreation Division 2003 Third Quarter Report

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002 by the King County Council, included a reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division. Specifically, the ordinance states:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C., 2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division’s efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexations areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

The following report responds to the reporting requirements of the Omnibus Parks Ordinance and is structured as follows:

- I. Revenues (budgeted v. actual, 2002 v. 2003)
 - a. User fees
 - i. aquatics
 - ii. other
 - b. Enterprise (advertising, leasing, concessions - gifts/bequests/donations - other revenues and cost savings)
 - c. Intergovernmental
 - d. Other miscellaneous revenues
- II. Partnerships to provide additional recreational opportunities
- III. Transfers
- IV. Community outreach and involvement

Section I. Revenues

The Parks and Recreation Division's 2003 budget totals \$16.4 million. Of that amount, \$1.2 million is anticipated to come from new, entrepreneurial efforts; \$3.6 million is anticipated to be generated by user fee revenue of which a significant portion is based on fee increases the Parks Division implemented in January 2003; \$2.3 million to come from intergovernmental transfers; and \$116,000 is anticipated to come from miscellaneous sources such as special use permits.

Table 1: Parks Division Revenues 2002 and 2003

	Through 3rd Qtr 2002	Through 3rd Qtr 2003	2003 Budget
User Fees (Aquatics and other)	\$2,202,049	\$2,732,526	\$3,608,056
New Enterprise Revenue	\$0	\$771,256	\$1,177,150
Intergovernmental (SWM, Roads, Wastewater, REET)	\$1,230,162	\$2,360,733*	\$2,360,733
Other	\$67,798	\$255,707	\$116,060
TOTAL:	\$3,500,009	\$6,120,222	\$7,261,999

* Fully committed – to be transferred to Parks by end of 2003

User Fees

As mentioned in the first and second quarter reports, user fee revenues in King County Parks and Recreation are very seasonal. In terms of facility availability and demand the peak period for user fee revenues is March to October. From November through February, a large portion of the park system is unavailable for rental, (e.g. grass athletic fields, and outdoor pools at Vashon and Cottage Lake), and demand from the public is generally greatly reduced.

For 2003, the Division set fees at levels to meet revenue targets established in the Omnibus Parks Ordinance. Generally, for those facilities and services that were available from January through September, demand for services has not dropped significantly in light of fee increases, and in many instances demand did not drop at all.

Historically, the 3rd quarter is the highest user fee revenue period of the year and it looks like 2003 will hold to this pattern. The Division continues to closely monitor user fee revenue and will be reporting the year-end results and analysis to the council in early 2004.

Aquatics User Fees

The user fee revenues identified in the table cover user fees at the three unincorporated area pools (Renton, Tahoma, and Evergreen), the King County Aquatic Center, and the Cottage Lake and Vashon outdoor pools. The table does not include aquatic user fee revenues from those pools the Parks Division is operating under an operating agreement with a city. In order to meet the revenue targets established in the Omnibus Parks Ordinance, the Division needs to increase aquatic user fee revenues by approximately 25% in 2003. Through the end of the third quarter of 2003, aquatics user fee revenues were up approximately 37%, compared to the first, second and third quarters of 2002, significantly above the 25% goal. The percentage revenue changes for each individual pool during the third quarter (as compared to 3rd quarter 2002) are as follows: Vashon: 67%; KCAC: 58%; Cottage Lake: 46%; Renton Pool: 38%; Evergreen Pool: 13%; Tahoma Pool: 10%. The Parks Division will continue to closely monitor revenue from aquatics user fees to determine whether adjustments in user fees are warranted.

The following table identifies individual pools revenues:

Table 2: Aquatic Users Fees 2002 and 2003

	Through 3rd Qtr 2002	Through 3rd Qtr 2003	% Change
Vashon	\$43,005	\$71,690	67%
Cottage Lake	\$55,696	\$81,394	46%
Evergreen	\$97,876	\$111,050	13%
Renton	\$181,724	\$250,442	38%
Tahoma	\$277,920	\$304,842	10%
KCAC	\$354,289	\$561,149	58%
TOTAL	\$1,010,510	\$1,380,567	37%

Other User Fees and Rentals

This category includes athletic field rentals, picnic shelters, building rentals, and recreation programs. These fees apply to the Fairgrounds, Community Centers, and all parks with ballfields or picnic shelters. There is typically very little activity during the first several months of the year for these facilities and programs. For example, of the 117 athletic fields the county owns and operates in 2003, only 9 sand athletic fields are open and available during the months of January and February. Based on the Omnibus Parks Ordinance, athletic field user fees were generally increased 100%, with the exception of sand soccer fields, which were held at 2002 levels for the first quarter of 2003. All other user fees were increased an average of 25%.

In aggregate, fee revenue from these sources through the 3rd quarter of 2003 is up 13% compared to the first three quarters of 2002. The percentage increase for the major categories are as follows: Fields/Facilities: 34%; Recreation Programs: 4%; Fairgrounds: 2%. The Parks Division is realizing the positive revenue impact of the County Council approved user fee increase for the sand athletic fields that went into effect starting April 1, 2003. The Fairgrounds revenue increase of 2% amidst increased facility rental fees has exposed a price sensitivity for the Fairgrounds that the Division is monitoring closely.

Table 3: Field and Facility User Fee Revenues 2002 and 2003

	Through 3rd Qtr 2002	Through 3rd Qtr 2003	% Change
Fields/Facilities	\$423,708	\$567,650	34%
Recreation Programs	\$28,397	\$29,621	4%
Fairgrounds	\$739,434	\$754,688	2%
TOTAL	\$1,191,539	\$1,351,959	13%

Enterprise Activities

The 2003 Parks and Recreation Division Budget assumes \$1.2 million in revenue from new ways of doing business. The primary identifiable components to the 2003 enterprise activities are the implementation of a parking fee and concert series at Marymoor Park. The Parking Fee, Concert Series, and RFP efforts already underway are anticipated to generate between \$700,000 and \$800,000 in revenue. This revenue is not guaranteed, but is viewed by the Division as highly likely. In addition, the Division has received approximately \$110,000 in revenues from events that occurred in 2002, but the money was received after the 2002 books were closed. Therefore, the revenue is included in the 2003 budget.

The Division continues to work hard to identify other entrepreneurial efforts in order to meet the \$1.2 million target. However, due to the unpredictable nature of revenue from advertising and sponsorships in the infancy of this line of business for the Parks Division, any projected revenues are speculative.

Table 4: Enterprise Activities and Anticipated Revenue

Activity	Revenue through 3rd Qtr.	2003 Target Revenue
Marymoor Parking Fee	\$229,825	\$300,000 to \$400,000
Marymoor Concert Series	\$259,247	\$300,000
Various Concessions & RFPs	\$150,274	\$67,000
Other Enterprise Efforts	\$131,910	\$433,000 to \$483,000
TOTAL:	\$771,256	\$1,100,000 to \$1,250,000

Marymoor Parking Fee

The Division began implementing a \$1 parking fee at Marymoor Park in early February. Through September the parking fee has generated \$229,825. The Division placed temporary honor boxes in each of the parking lots throughout the park. During the first quarter, the Division finalized plans for a more permanent system. The system was approved by the Council during the second quarter and will be in place fourth quarter. Based on current collection rates, the parking fee is anticipated to generate \$300,000 for the entire year. The Division is optimistic that revenues will increase beyond the projected \$300,000 with the implementation of the new permanent system in future years. The new system should help to increase compliance through ease of use and the ability to provide change to users.

Concert Series

The Parks Division signed an agreement for a Concert Series at Marymoor Park that was projected to generate up to \$300,000 in 2003. The Concert Series began in early June and ran through September 5th. The series was well received and generated \$259,247 on concert fees and concession revenues alone. The Division has had discussions with potential corporate sponsors regarding a naming right/title sponsorship for the concert venue but none have been secured at present. Advertising agreements for the concert series benefiting the Parks Division were signed with FirstTech Credit Union and Eddie Bauer. Any naming rights/title sponsorship and advertising revenues are in addition to the revenue from the concert series itself.

In addition to the most visible efforts to generate enterprise revenue, the Division has an array of other efforts underway to implement the new ways of doing business.

RFP

In the late Fall of 2002 the Division put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for creative revenue generating ideas. The Division received approximately 30 responses to the RFP in January 2003 [a summary of the RFP responses was included as part of the first quarter report] and has followed up with approximately 20 of them, including small to medium size food and beverage vendors, swimwear vendors, dog wash vendors, and a trail running series. The four race Cougar Mountain Trail Running Series generated \$8,400 and significant volunteer trail maintenance support for Parks.

The Division intends to issue another RFP in the fall of 2003 to expand the possible revenue generating opportunities.

Driving Range

The Division completed a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the development and operation of a driving range at Marymoor Park. An RFQ was published at the end of the second quarter to be quickly followed by a Request for Proposal issued to successful respondents to the RFQ. The goal is to have revenues from this operation benefiting Parks during 2004.

Advertising

The Division continued to develop and implement innovative and creative advertising opportunities. These opportunities reflected two advertising strategies:

1. Generate revenue from the sales of ball field signs and specialty advertising in parks, pools and facilities.

The Division continued to disseminate brochures intended to foster advertising revenue and has had a small degree of success. We will continue to support this initiative and have produced advertising collateral in support on a new "Partnership For Parks" initiative that will launch in the fourth quarter. 2003 revenues will be limited, but with the new "Partnership For Parks" initiative the Division anticipates a significant increase in advertising revenues in 2004.

2. Generate significant return on investment for the dollars allocated to promote the King County Fair and other Division events, activities and programs.

The Division has achieved tremendous success in the marketing and promotion of our programs, events and initiatives. We received unprecedented media coverage (television, radio and print) for the King County Fair by implementing creative promotional opportunities such as “Cowpie Bingo”, the “Rolling Scones Tour”, and the ever-popular “Crittter Crowning” event. The Division successfully leveraged media buys at a 5 to 1 ratio resulting in over \$250,000 of media coverage for just over \$50,000 in expenditures. “Cowpie Bingo” alone generated over \$50,000 in absolutely free media coverage with the highlight being KING 5 *Evening Magazine* host John Curley’s daylong coverage of the event.

Pursuing Gifts, Bequests and Donations

The Division continues to pursue gifts, bequests and donations on an ongoing basis. These efforts are coordinated with many of our non-profit partners such as the Northwest Parks Foundation, Friends of Marymoor Park, and Serve Our Dog Area (SODA). The Division applied for grant monies through the City of Redmond Tourism Grant program and the Tread Lightly trail program.

The White Center program has been very successful in obtaining operating grants to help enhance their programs and services. The program received a \$4,000 BOOST Learning Grant, \$7,750 Community Arts Initiative Grant, \$2,025 Youth Tobacco Coalition Grant, and an \$18,000 grant that will be available for 2004 programming from the SW Weed & Seed program.

Additionally, the Division has received a defibrillator from the Federal Way Fire Department. The Division worked with the family of one individual who donated \$6,000 to Cougar Mountain Park.

During the first quarter, the Parks Division received a grant of \$46,202 from the Washington State Department of Agriculture for the King County Fair event. The Friends of Marymoor Park was awarded a \$37,500 grant from the Urban Forestry Program via the Water and Land Resources Division to reforest an area of declining cottonwood trees. The Serve Our Dog Area (SODA) group donated \$25,000 worth of split rail fencing to the project as well.

Enterprise Revenue Strategic Plan

The Division is implementing a Revenue Enhancement Strategic Plan. The plan positions King County as an advertising partner, program and event facilitator, media partner and entrepreneur. This comprehensive approach reflects consistent and effective outreach strategies; short-term, mid-term and long-range revenue strategies; and mutually beneficial opportunities to blend the “parks” and “corporate” cultures. The Division continues to pursue revenue generating by:

- Executing the Golf Driving Range RFQ (completed August 21, 2003).
- Executing the Golf Driving Range RFP (initiated with an October 9, 2003 submittal deadline).
- Continuing to meet with and coordinate revenue based proposals to corporate entities such as US Bank, Key Bank, Group Health Cooperative, Starbucks, Washington Mutual, Comcast, Allstate.
- Continuing exploratory meetings with media partners for event and program promotion, sponsorship and revenue based initiatives.
- Developing the collateral for the “Partnership for Parks” program with an anticipated launch date in November 2003.
- Developing a global RFI & P for dissemination in October 2003.
- Continued meetings with regional and national advertising agencies to solidify the parks system as a value-added amenity in major marketing campaigns.

Employee Cost/Revenue Team

The Division’s employee revenue generating and cost-savings team continues to meet and work on revenue enhancing strategies along with cost saving measures. The team is primarily focused on new and innovative initiatives for revenue generation. The team is currently analyzing a number of ideas generated through recent RFI & P’s including Yurt camping facilities, a Pet Memorial Garden, expansion of donation boxes, slides at pools and more comprehensive party packages at facilities.

The revenue team implemented party packages at pools that should generate \$500 in revenue and the direct sale of swimming merchandise projected to generate \$3,000 in revenue.

As part of the capital program, computerized lighting system at athletic fields have been installed which allows for more efficient operation of our lighting system. This system is projected to save \$31,000 per year. Other efficiencies include the installation of low flow toilets at the Renton Pool and self-compacting garbage cans at Marymoor Park.

In an effort to reduce operating costs as well as conserve our natural resources at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center, the Parks Division and Wastewater Division teamed up to replace all fixtures within restrooms with high efficiency units that used less water. The savings from this project is estimated at \$10,000 annually, which provides relief to the Parks Division Operating Budget. Additionally, as less water is needed to operate these fixtures, less wastewater is generated. The Parks Division, in an effort to realize additional efficiencies, will continue to replace older less efficient models with updated units systemwide as is possible.

In the first quarter, the Division implemented the consolidation of email accounts for field maintenance personnel, saving the Division nearly \$12,000 a year. Other examples of revenue generating ideas that are currently being developed include the development of campgrounds and yurts at various park locations.

Revised Financial Systems

The Parks Division has revised its financial tracking system in ARMS by the development of an organizational structure consistent with the new mission of the Division. Project accounting has been refined to ensure the ability to track expenditures by site or project and link it to revenues for each, something that was not easily done with the former system. An electronic, relational database time sheet tracking system is in the process of final testing for implementation. It will allow each employee to enter data on a daily basis for entry into ARMS electronically for labor distribution. This will replace the current manual system.

Intergovernmental

The 2003 Parks and Recreation Division budget includes \$2.36 million in Intergovernmental revenues, including \$640,000 of Surface Water Management dollars to support maintenance of the resource and ecological lands, \$288,804 in Road Fund dollars to support maintenance of the unincorporated area regional trails, \$500,000 in one-time Wastewater dollars for an easement, and \$931,929 in Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) dollars to support the Division capital program and land management responsibilities.

Other

The Division anticipated \$116,060 in 2003 from miscellaneous revenue sources, for example special use permits for utilities and other private uses of public land. This estimate is based on historical revenues from these sources, however through the third quarter over \$250,000 has been collected. The Division has exceeded its goal in this area for 2003.

Section II. Partnerships - implementing agreements with other organizations

The primary approach the Parks Division will utilize to develop agreements with user group organizations to provide recreation services is the Association Development Operating Partnerships ADOPs Program. The ADOP Program is a creation and recommendation of the Active Sports Youth Recreation Commission (ASPYRe) to provide grants to user groups and community-based organizations to develop, operate and/or maintain a public park or recreation facility.

There is a total of \$605,000 in the Division's 2003 Capital Budget for the ADOP Program. A 2003 Budget Proviso requires the Council to approve ADOP Program guidelines and criteria before allowing the Executive to implement the program. The County Council adopted the motion adopting the ADOPS program guidelines and selection criteria on March 31, 2003.

The Division completed the first ADOP partnership agreement with the King County Regional RC Model Airplane Flying Area at the closed Hobart Landfill. The Division continues to work with user groups to identify partnership opportunities. The following is a list of ADOP proposals that are currently being developed by potential partners:

- T.O.P.P.S. / King County Regional Indoor Tennis Center (with Tennis Outreach Programs for Puget Sound)
- Pacific Northwest Rugby Union / King County Regional Rugby Fields
- PSSBL/FAF/King County Regional Community Baseball Stadium
- Regional RC Model Airplane Flying Facility with Several RC groups
- WRS (We Ride Sideways)-West/King County Pacific NW Mountainboarding Facility
- BBTC / King County Backcountry Mountainbiking Course (with Bicycle Trails Association)
- Small Craft / Rowing Facility in South King County
- AWA / Whitewater Recreation Area
- HHSC / Equestrian Riding Arena
- MCA / Mirrormont Community Park
- RAF / SWLL/White Center Stadium and Ballfields
- Slambox, Inc. / White Center Slambox Facility
- KNLL / Adult Baseball Field Conversion

In addition to the ADOPs Program, the Division has implemented or is working on a number of other partnerships, identified below.

King County reached agreement with the Boys and Girls Club to operate the West Hill and Gold Creek Community Centers under a long-term lease arrangement.

The Division reached agreement with the Redmond Little League on a concession agreement to operate and maintain the new Redmond Ridge Park, which opened June 1st.

The Division reached agreement with Northshore Youth Soccer Association to help develop soccer fields in the region without increasing maintenance and operating expenditures to King County.

The Division signed supplemental maintenance agreements allowing user groups to do quick preparation maintenance of ballfields prior to games at White Center Park, the South County and Snoqualmie Valley ballfields. SEIU 925 Labor Management Committee (LMC) worked collaboratively with the management team to develop these agreements.

The Division developed two partnerships to provide interpretive programs that were eliminated in the 2003 budget. The first partnership was with Nature Visions, a non-profit, which will continue providing interpretive classes to schools throughout King County using the Parks Division interpretive program materials. The second partnership is with the City of Kent and the Friends of Soos Creek Park to continue providing interpretive/educational walks at Soos Creek Park. The program in 2003 was successful and planning is currently underway to operate the 2004 programs.

The Division continues to work with a user group to develop a privately financed athletic field complex at Marymoor Park. The complex would be available to the public and would result in no maintenance or operation burden on the Parks Division.

The Division has partnered with the Serve Our Dog Area user group to sell parking passes for Marymoor Park. The effort has generated additional pass sales for the Division, generated more than \$2,000 for the organization, and has increased SODA membership by nearly 90 members.

In addition to pursuing new agreements with organizations, the Division is currently working with existing user groups to review and potentially revise long term use agreements to ensure County Park Division costs are fully reimbursed, generate small amounts of revenue and protect the long term use of the activity. Examples include new, long term agreements for the pea patch, velodrome and rowing club areas at Marymoor Park. The goal of the Parks Division is to work with these valued user groups to ensure that at a minimum, County maintenance costs are covered.

Section III. Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

At the start of 2002 the Parks and Recreation Division had a total of 10 local pools and two-dozen local parks and community centers inside incorporated boundaries. The total cost of operating these facilities was approximately \$7 million. To date, King County has completed transfer agreements on 8 of the 10 local in-city pools (Redmond, Mercer Island, Kent, Federal Way, Northshore, Tukwila, Enumclaw and Mount Si) and seventeen local parks. Of the two remaining local in-city pools, the Mt. Rainier Pool in Des Moines is open to the public under a one-year operating agreement and a long-term lease-back arrangement has been reached on the Auburn Pool, whereby King County has no maintenance or operations obligations.

The parks that have been transferred include:

Juanita Beach Park	City of Kirkland
Eastgate Park	City of Bellevue
Manor Hill Park	City of Bellevue
Lake Burien School Site	City of Burien
Jenkins Creek Park	City of Covington
Luther Burbank Park	City of Mercer Island
Lea Hill Park	City of Auburn
Auburndale Two Park	City of Auburn
East Auburn Athletic Fields	City of Auburn
Salmon Creek Waterway	City of Burien
Lake Wilderness Park	City of Maple Valley
Fort Dent Park	City of Tukwila
Beaver Lake Park	City of Sammamish
Des Moines Creek Park	City of SeaTac
Si View Park	Si View Metropolitan Park District
Shamrock Park	Si View Metropolitan Park District
Bridle Crest Trail (Redmond)	City of Redmond

The Division continues to work with cities on the transfer of the remaining local parks. The immediate focus is on the remaining county owned parks within cities. The next area of emphasis will be on the remaining county owned parks within the potential annexation areas of cities. All of these efforts will be coordinated with, and complementary to, the broader county/city annexation discussions.

In addition to the transfer agreements identified above, the County reached agreement with the Boys and Girls Club to operate the West Hill and Gold Creek Community Centers under a long-term lease arrangement.

Section IV. Community Outreach and Involvement

The King County Parks and Recreation Division has pursued broader and more aggressive outreach techniques as part of its new way of doing business. A significant step forward was a plan developed collaboratively with consultant Lee Springgate of the Point Wilson Group. The plan outlined a long-term public outreach strategy to help the Parks Division reconnect with the public, user groups and decision-makers it serves. Per the Omnibus Parks Ordinance, this outreach strategy was delivered to the clerk of the Council in February 2003.

Outreach activities include:

- *Reconnecting People to Their Parks*, long-term outreach strategy developed collaboratively with The Point Wilson Group
- Executive listserve messages
- User Fee increase outreach
- Marymoor parking fee outreach
- Web page enhancements

Reconnecting People to Their Parks: Outreach and Reconnecting Strategy: Part of changing the way King County Parks does business is enhancing its relationship with the public it serves. In November 2002 a public outreach steering committee was established to work with the Point Wilson Group to develop a long-term outreach strategy for reconnecting with the public. The result of the effort is a comprehensive plan for reconnecting with the public. A copy of the plan was delivered to the clerk of the council in February 2003. An internal working group was established in February 2003 to implement the plan.

The Outreach Strategies Group has met bi-monthly focusing its' efforts on key strategies to identify and develop a plan to reach key stakeholders. Lead staff has been assigned to be accountable as a first step in establishing regular, ongoing communication with stakeholders.

Five public meetings were held in the third quarter at various locations throughout King County. The public was given the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions about how Parks' new way of doing business is working (including proposed code changes to implement the business plan); provide input on how funding is directed, and tell staff what they want to see as Parks continues to cut costs and pursue new revenue generating initiatives.

Outreach to build participation in the public meetings consisted of:

- 740 postcards invites mailed to user groups and city parks and recreation staff
- 742 member list serve sent e-mail notification. List serve members were among the more than 700 people who attended public meetings in spring of 2002.
- E-mail invitations to all city parks directors
- Sent notification to media. Stories were published or aired by:
 - Seattle PI
 - Seattle PI – Susan Paynter column
 - Seattle Times
 - Enumclaw Courier Herald
 - KIRO Radio
 - KOMO News 4

An on-line survey was also developed to give the public another avenue to provide input that will help guide the Division to improve service and meet public needs. Over 1,100 on-line surveys were completed. The following is a brief summary of the survey results:

Summary of Online Survey Results

1) Facilities most visited –

- 161 different parks and facilities were mentioned by survey respondents.
- Those most frequently mentioned were: (with percent/number who chose)
 - Marymoor Park (76 percent/835)
 - Burk Gilman Trail (17 percent/186)
 - Sammamish River Trail (9 percent/102)
 - Sixty Acres Park (8 percent/88)
 - Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park (8 percent/85)
 - Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (5 percent/54)
 - Big Finn Hill Park (4 percent/49)
 - Tolt MacDonald Park (4 percent/47)
 - Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area (4 percent/44)
 - Squak Mountain/Tiger Mountain Corridor (4 percent/40)

2) Time of year people visit -

- Most people (83 percent) say they visit all year round.
- Summer is also a time that was mentioned by many people (11 percent)

3) Days people visit –

- Most people visit parks on weekends
- Many people also visit during the week
- The fewest people say they visit on Monday

4) Time people visit –

- The heaviest use times are 8 AM – 3 PM and after 5 PM. The lowest use time is before 8 AM.

5) How frequently people visit –

- Most people visit parks at least weekly (67 percent)

6) How people get information on King County parks –

- The most frequently mentioned avenue of information was friends followed by: media, King County website and Internet other than King County website, in no particular order.

7) Activities people do in King County parks facilities – (with percent/number who chose)

- The top activities chosen from the pull down menu were:
 - Off leash dogging (49 percent/503)
 - Hiking (35 percent/357)
 - Biking – trail (28 percent/287)
 - Soccer (13.7 percent/139)
 - Picnicking – non shelter (12.7 percent/129)
 - Running (12.1 percent/123)
- Other activities that received more than 50 responses were:
 - Baseball
 - Mountain biking
 - Horseback riding
 - Swimming
 - Rugby
 - Bird Watching
 - Walking/exercise

8) Rating of facilities – (1 –5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent)

- Facilities were highly rated by respondents including cleanliness, safety, attractiveness and fields. Though ratings for fees dropped somewhat from others, still there was general support for fees. Several people also made comments expressing their support for the off leash dog area at Marymoor, the need to re-pave portions of bike trails, and the need for more ruby facilities.
 - Cleanliness of parks – 76 percent give cleanliness a 4 or above.
 - Safety of parks – 76 percent give safety of parks a 4 or above.
 - Attractiveness of park – 78 percent gave attractiveness of parks a 4 or above.
 - Availability of fields – 78 percent give availability of fields a 3 or above.
 - Access to athletic facilities you like – 78 percent gave facility access a 3 or above.
 - Fees – 69 percent gave it a 3 or above.

9) Rating of service - (1-5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent)

- Respondents generally consider staff helpful, friendly and like reservation procedures. Several people commented that they have no experience with staff because they use parks that are not staffed, or use the park during times staff are not present.
 - Helpful staff – 87 percent gave helpful staff a 3 or above
 - Friendly staff – 89 percent gave friendly staff a 3 or above.
 - Reservation procedures – 84 percent gave reservation procedures a 3 or above.

10) Rating new ways of doing business – (1 – 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent)

- The concert series, Cougar Mountain Trail Running Series and the Party Packages are all popular entrepreneurial ventures. More people expressed dissatisfaction with advertising in parks and the parking fee at Marymoor, but still the majority of people are satisfied with these initiatives.
 - Concert series – 81 percent gave the concert series a 3 or above.
 - Advertising in parks – 49 percent gave advertising in parks a 3 or above. 36 percent gave it a 1.
 - Parking fee at Marymoor – 57 percent gave the parking fee a 3 or above. 27 percent gave it a 1.
 - Party package – 76 percent gave the party package a 3 or above.
 - Cougar Mountain Trail Running Series – 85 percent gave the CMTS a 3 or above.

11) What people like best about King County Parks

- In this open ended question, the most frequently given responses were:
 - Off leash dog area at Marymoor (274 responses)
 - Natural environment (102 responses)
 - Accessibility (85 responses)
 - Number (43 responses)
 - Trails (36 responses)
 - Variety of parks (35 responses)
 - Variety of activities (31 responses)
 - Well maintained (26 responses)
 - Clean (25 responses)
 - They exist (19 responses)
 - Free (14 responses)

12) What people would like to see improved

- In this open ended questions, the most frequently mentioned topics were:
 - Athletic facilities (92 responses)
 - Fields (43 responses)
 - Soccer fields (14 responses)
 - Swimming (19 responses)
 - Other (16 responses)
 - Off leash dog areas (63 responses)
 - Trails (43 responses)
 - Paved (23 responses)
 - Other (20 responses)
 - Fees (32 responses)
 - Parking (18 responses)
 - Other (14 responses)
 - Maintenance (20 responses)
 - Bike facilities (19 responses)
 - Mountain Biking Trails (13 responses)
 - Trails (6 responses)
 - Restrooms (19 responses)
 - Maintenance (5 responses)
 - More (5 responses)
 - Other (9 responses)
 - Parking lots (17 responses)
 - Funding (12 responses)

13) Demographic Information –

- Survey respondents were mostly over 30, earn more than \$75,000 a year, are married and own their homes. There was a fairly even split between men and women with and without children.

Additional outreach efforts have been made with the cities and unincorporated area councils. Staff attended a City Managers meeting and an unincorporated area council meeting to provide an update on parks issues and listen to what are important issues for them. Additionally, staff attended the North Highline Area Council meeting to discuss issues surrounding Lakewood Park.

On-going coordination continues with the City of Redmond regarding Marymoor Park. Quarterly meetings have been established to ensure open communication about events and planning at this site.

Executive Listserve Messages: The Executive listserve was created in spring 2002 to keep hundreds of public meeting participants apprised of rapid progress in the parks transition plan. At sign-in, meeting participants were asked to provide their e-mail addresses if interested in receiving updates on the parks transition.

Initially the listserve was used by the Executive to communicate significant milestones in the parks transition process such as the Task Force Phase I recommendations, the Executive's recommendations to Council and new, entrepreneurial ventures. With the rapidly increasing pace of change, communication has occurred more regularly. Listserve messages are also available on the Executive's website.

The listserve initially reached 400 people and has expanded to reach 732. Outreach strategies used to expand the list include:

- The online poll on the future of King County parks, posted in conjunction with public meetings in spring 2002, asked people to submit their e-mail if interested in receiving updates on the parks transition.
- The parks transition website invites people to sign-up for the listserve to receive regular updates on transition activities.
- Cards with the transition website address and directions on how to subscribe to the listserve are given out at parks facilities and mailed with reservation information.
- Written responses to comments or inquiries from parks users invite them to subscribe to the listserve for regular updates.

Fee Increase Outreach – General: A broad outreach effort was undertaken as part of the process for increasing 2003 user fees at park facilities. Proposed fees were:

- Published in the Seattle Times,
- Posted at affected facilities,
- Posted on the Internet,
- Direct mailed to over 400 user groups, and
- A special e-mail address was established to receive feedback

Approximately 280 comments were received. Of those:

- Three commented on pea-patch fees
- Three commented on general recreation fees
- Eight commented on aquatics fees
- 266 focused on parking charges at Marymoor

A similar effort will be undertaken in establishing the 2004 fees.

Fee Increase Outreach – Marymoor Parking Fee: Because responses to fee increases overwhelmingly addressed the Marymoor parking fee, the fee was modified and outreach activities were implemented. Outreach activities included:

- A partnership with Serve Our Dog Area to sell six-month parking passes, and
- The first day of the parking fee staff were present at Marymoor to answer questions.

In response to feedback, the proposed annual fee for Marymoor parking was not offered. Instead, an introductory six-month pass for \$50 was offered.

A partnership with Serve Our Area (S.O.D.A.) was established for selling parking passes. This outreach technique provided mutual benefits to King County and S.O.D.A. S.O.D.A. sold the \$50 parking pass to its members for \$50 with \$5 going to support S.O.D.A. Selling the parking pass allowed S.O.D.A. to raise money for its stewardship of the off-leash area at Marymoor and boosted its membership.

On the first day of the one-dollar parking fee at Marymoor, King County staff was present on a voluntary basis in parking lots throughout the park to explain how the parking fee worked, and answer questions about why it is necessary. Staff distributed fact sheets to the thousands of Saturday visitors and helped Marymoor users navigate the collection system.

Web Page Enhancements: The Parks Division has been steadily making improvements to its web pages. The Division has been posting all information regarding new ways of doing business, the Parks Task Force and the Executive's Business Transition Plan on its web pages. The Division has also revamped the Parks web page, making it easier for citizens to navigate the site, find information on individual parks and park features. The Division has also added a comment box on its web page to accept citizen input.